(xi) The Government has launched a centrally-sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres and to give fillip to exports.

(xii) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres, a scheme "Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme" (TCIDS) has been launched.

Consignment of cotton through Wagah Border

1696. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistani importers of Indian cotton are keen to get their consignment of cotton through Wagah Border instead of *via* sea shipment; and

(b) India's response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Government has not received any specific proposal about Pakistani importers of Indian cotton showing their keenness to get their consignment of cotton through Wagah Border instead of the sea route.

(b) Does not arise.

Opening of more showrooms by CCICI

1697. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Cottage Industries Corporation of India propose to open more showrooms both in the country and abroad to increase its turnover;

(b) if so, the details of its expansion plan;

(c) the places where the new emporia are planned both in India and abroad; and

(d) the action plan to boost our export and economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN):

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Central Cottage Industries Corporation of India Ltd. is seeking to expand its retail network by opening new emporia on franchise basis in metro cities; State capitals; places of tourist interest and in such countries where there is a significant potential for sale of Indian Handicrafts and Handlooms.

(d) Some of important actions taken by the Government to boost economy and export of textile items are as follows:

* Launching of Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme for modernisation of textile industry;
* Launching of Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme for upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres;
* Launching of a programme as part of Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme for modernisation of weaving capacities;
* Allowing foreign equity participation upto 100% through automatic route in the textile sector with certain exceptions;
* Announcements in consecutive Budgets aiming *inter-alia* at further rationalisation of duty structure in the textile sector to improve competitiveness and reducing costs of machinery critical to technology upgradation;
* Launching of Technology Mission on the Cotton to achieve increasing cotton productivity and upgrade its quality upto international standards;
* De-reservation of woven readymade garment sector from SSI;
* Setting up of Apparel Parks and providing infrastructure facilities therein for encouraging growth and competitiveness of clothing in global market.

12.00 Noon

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

I Report and Accounts (2002-2003) of the Rehabilitation Plantations Limited, Pundur, Kerala and released papers.